344 The pieces of bark, one to two meters long and approximately a half meter wide, are attached to the frame in the following manner. To the inner side of the wall posts longitudinal

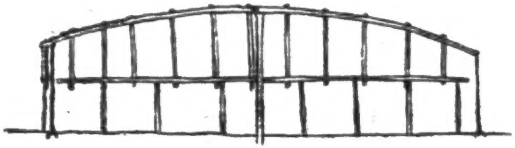

Fig. 25. Frame of a Meeting House of the Fang from the Region of Komo (Village of Omvan, French Congo). Cross-Section Lengthwise.

strips of raffia leaf stems (ebai) are /64/ attached by means of boards at certain distances from each other, and to these the bark pieces are fastened by means of raffia strips which run exactly parallel to the boards. The posts, therefore, usually stand outside the house, very rarely within it. The bark pieces and raffia strips are held together by bands of Oncocalamus (nloń I = Oncocalamus and band) (1) -- see Plate 16 -- and they are

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1. The Jaunde buy this "bush rope" from Elandi, the only place in the Jaunde region where bush rope is still available; otherwise they use Dipteropeltis poranoides Hallier f. (atu[k]e ndžik).

finished by two people working together in the following manner. One of them crouches inside the house, the other outside, and

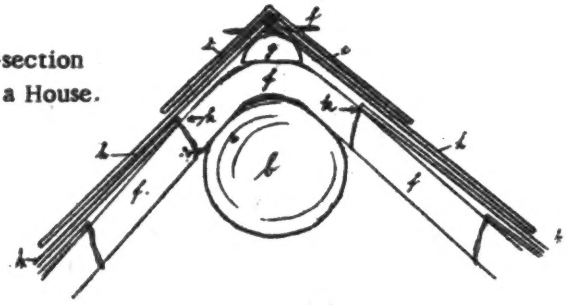

Fig. 26. Cross-section of the Ridge of a House.

4. Metalworking.

(a) Iron extraction.

325 The extraction of iron, surely one of the most admirable achievements of the Negro, is carried on in the Pangwe region only south of the Campo by the Fang and a small number of Ntum kin groups. Traces of old smelting works, on the other hand, indicate that in former times iron extraction extended farther northward. [438] /Fig. 178 appears here in the original text/. Nowadays the Bulu buy iron from the Ntum in the south, and the Jaunde and Bene buy it from the Eton. The principal places where iron is extracted are located in the Woddo and Kje regions, as well as along the upper Uelle, but compared with the places where ironstone is found, they are few in number. Although for the most part people are familiar with the technique of iron extraction, only a few really engage in it. In part the reason for this may be the laboriousness of the enterprise, but in the main it must be sought in the superstitious notions connected with the preparation of iron. These notions require the cooperation of the medicine man, the purchase of expensive medicines, and the strict observance of the rules of 325 abstinence. The rare and difficult art of extracting it from the 789 rocks and then forging it into tools and weapons has given iron a 435 special importance, perhaps also because both techniques require fire, the sacred element which /225/ /Figs. 179 and 180 appear here in the original text/ the Pangwe worship in the Ngi cult. The smelting of ironstone is therefore carried out under the guidance and supervision of the medicine man. Exactly as in the case of the cults, it is he alone who, by means of his medicine, can transfer to others the influence over the process with which he is endowed, or, more accurately, the others can obtain from the medicine man the ability to smelt iron only by purchasing a medicine from him. This smelting medicine (bi̊ǎn akū̊ǎ, abůb-akū̊ǎ) (1) costs five sheep,

1. bi̊ǎn = medicine, akū̊ǎ = iron smelting, abůb = spider, which plays a role in the acquisition medicines and is usually -- not always -- present in the smelting medicine.

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422 material only through forging."

the /233/ smelting has taken place, with the exception of a piece about the size of a head, which he must give to the medicine man. The ore bloom is pounded into little bits by the workmen right on the spot (Fig. 185). The workmen have the right to take home the splinters that fall off, and the owner does nothing further with it. [438] These pieces (epfŭs-ekīēi) (1) are the end result of the iron smelting

1. pfŭ̄-ī, "to knock off (piecemeal)."

and constitute a regular article of trade wherever European trade is not yet too highly developed. /Fig. 183 appears here in the original text./

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434 A few more figures about the expenses and the net profit. In giving these -- as for Bebai -- I assume a smelting period consisting of five smeltings with five owners of the smelting hut. The workers can buy the bellows for ten spears (= 70 pfennigs) from the bellows maker, or they can get them for nothing if they bring the necessary block of wood to the man's house. So far as I know, they must obtain the hide for themselves in each case. The clay blast pipe likewise costs ten spears (= 70 pfennigs), so each bellows worker has 20 spears (= 1.40 marks) in expenses. The owner or owners of the smelting huts have a single expenditure of about 120 marks for the medicine, not including the labor for the construction of the hut and the transportation of the ore. From the iron left to him as wages, each bellows worker earns at one smelting only 15 to 20 spears (= 1.05 to 1.40 marks); hence, from five smeltings he makes a profit of from five to seven marks from which the single expenditure /234/ /Fig. 184 appears here in the original text/ of 1.40 marks should be subtracted. The medicine man does better. From his share of loose iron he can earn 30 spears (= 2.10 marks) and from his share of core iron 50 spears (= 3.50 marks), so altogether he can earn 5.60 marks. From the five smeltings, therefore, he can earn a total of 28 marks. As regards the owner, the ore bloom for him amounts to 500 spears (= 35 marks). Altogether, the yield of one smelting period would amount to: (17 X 17 spears + 80 spears + 500 spears) X 5, 17 workers at 17 spears + medicine man + owner in five

palm oil is the basis of sauces and stews eaten with tubers and cereals. Groundnuts are widely used (do not the Ewôndo owe their name to them?). The dough obtained after cooking and pounding goes toward the making of numerous dishes and provides the main part of the needed protein. One article of food ought finally to be mentioned because it is very much liked and also because its consumption seems absolutely uneconomical—pumpkin seeds. The seeds are preserved, dried, and cleaned one by one, then put to boil, and mashed. The skill required for, and the time spent in, shelling the seeds appears subject to scanty return (1).

1. But fritters made of pumpkin-seed dough are delicious .... There is quite a good trade in these seeds for town consumption. (P. A.)

2. Agriculture

Before broaching the description of present-day agriculture, we must see what it used to be like and what it still is in certain traditionalist sections. In fact, methods do not appear to have changed at all; new crops have simply been added to the old ones. It is likely that because of the influence of these new crops /29/ the whole technology (material techniques, legal techniques, etc.) will develop further. But that trend is only starting, and at present the cultivation of groundnuts, maize, and other long-familiar foodstuffs remains nearly what it was forty years ago, before the advent of the cacao tree.

Traditional agriculture

Formerly, each family produced everything it needed and confined its efforts. There were no cash crops, there was no article of food suitable for maintaining an exchange system, but all sorts of crops were cultivated. As to clothes, elderly Bané and Ewôndo state that the cultivation and weaving of cotton was practiced by their ancestors; there could be no question of this in their present habitat, and the tradition is valuable merely as evidence, either for those who believe that the Pahouin come from regions further north, or for those who see in the Beti not true Pahouin but a Pahouinized people (1). Each

in 1954 in connection with a study of family budgets.

amount of food necessary to maintain the population: a crop census was taken in 1948 in one of the Sangmélima cantons (2). In order to

2. Report of the administrative officer, J. M. Soupault. An average individual's requirement would be: 250 maize plants, 330 manioc plants, 130 plantains, 110 macabo, 7 kilograms of rice, and 32 kilograms of groundnuts.

satisfy the needs of 6, 249 inhabitants there is no "exportation" to speak of. The canton used to produce 1, 635, 000 maize plants, 2, 049, 000 manioc, 824, 190 plantain bananas, 687, 800 macabo. It furthermore provided 44 tons of rice, 200 tons of groundnuts. There were 85, 180 fruit trees producing various kinds of fruit (Pachylobes /Canarium edula Hooker, known as assa in Pahouin country—Ed./, Estulis, oranges, etc.)

Clearing land by burning and the absence of organic fertilizer probably explain the exhaustion of the soil and the shifting cultivation that results from it.

The breeding and rearing of small animals is nevertheless understood and practiced: goats, dogs, fowls, pigs were and still are plentiful in the villages. These animals do not seem to contribute much to the food supply nor to the economic life. The very limited practice of selling pieces of pork has dates from recent years. As a matter of fact, animals were useful for giving quasi-ritual presents, for paying bride prices, and for celebrating family occasions: at a marriage, burial, and the end of mourning, two or three goats were killed to provide food for the relatives.

Of course, these animals are not stabled or fed; the herds wander along the outskirts of villages and do not fail to plunder the gardens. There are innumerable classic quarrels between farmers and herders (with the slight difference here that no one is exclusively a herder nor exclusively a farmer). Was the practice of enclosing by hedges established so as to avoid such depredations, or to give military protection to the settlements? Whatever the origin, this practice associated with the raising of animals would have made it possible to avoid